

South America's Vibrant Cultural Calendar: Unmissable Festivals & Traditions

South American Holidays · Practice Test · 15 Questions

1. The Carnaval de Oruro in Bolivia is a UNESCO Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity. What is a central dance performance within this carnival, symbolizing the struggle between good and evil?

- A) La Marinera
- B) La Diablada
- C) El Canto a la Tierra
- D) La Cueca

2. Inti Raymi, celebrated in Cusco, Peru, is a historical reenactment of an ancient Inca ceremony. What is the primary purpose of this festival, which takes place during the winter solstice?

- A) To commemorate the Spanish conquest
- B) To honor Inti, the Sun God, and mark the beginning of the Andean New Year
- C) To celebrate agricultural innovations
- D) To showcase contemporary Peruvian art

3. The Feria de las Flores in Medellín, Colombia, is renowned for its Silleteros parade. What do the 'silleteros' carry on their backs in this parade, which has roots in 19th-century transportation methods?

- A) Musical instruments
- B) Intricate flower arrangements on wooden frames
- C) Agricultural tools
- D) Hand-painted canvases

4. Día de la Canción Criolla in Peru, celebrated on October 31st, pays homage to a unique musical tradition. What are the primary influences that shaped 'música criolla'?

- A) Indigenous Andean, European, and African rhythms
- B) Only Spanish and Italian folk music
- C) Brazilian samba and Argentinian tango
- D) Classical orchestral music

5. Pachamama Day, observed in August across Andean communities, is a celebration honoring Mother Earth. Which of these is a common ritual or offering during Pachamama celebrations?

- A) Burning incense in city squares
- B) Burying offerings like coca leaves, food, and drinks
- C) Singing traditional folk songs in churches
- D) Exchanging gifts with community elders

6. Semana Santa (Holy Week) is a significant observance throughout Latin America. In many Peruvian cities, what unique tradition is performed on the streets during Holy Week, often made from flowers, sawdust, or colored salt?

- A) Ice sculpting competitions
- B) Intricate carpets or 'alfombras' for processions
- C) Hot air balloon festivals
- D) Livestock exhibitions

7. The San Juan festival in the Peruvian Amazon, celebrated on June 24th, honors Saint John the Baptist. What traditional dish, symbolizing the saint's head, is a culinary highlight of this festival?

- A) Ceviche
- B) Aji de Gallina
- C) Juane
- D) Lomo Saltado

8. The Festival Internacional de la Vendimia in Ica, Peru, celebrates the grape harvest. What is a key activity during this festival that allows participants to engage in a traditional winemaking process?

- A) Olive oil tasting
- B) Grape stomping ('la pisa de uvas')
- C) Coffee bean roasting demonstrations
- D) Chocolate making workshops

9. The Diablada de Píllaro in Ecuador, celebrated in early January, has a strong rebellious character. What historical system is often cited as a key influence on the origins of this festival's devil characters?

- A) The Inca empire's administrative system
- B) The Spanish colonial hacienda system
- C) The modern Ecuadorian democratic republic
- D) The indigenous Muisca social structure

10. In Bolivia, the 'Carnaval de Oruro' is a major cultural event. The 'Diablada' dance within this carnival has roots in a fusion of pre-Columbian Andean rites and Catholic themes. Which Andean deity or concept is often associated with the 'devil' figure in the Diablada's pre-Columbian origins?

- A) Inti (Sun God)
- B) Viracocha (Creator God)
- C) Tío Supay (God of the underworld)
- D) Pachacamac (God of the heavens)

11. The 'Fiesta de la Patria Gaucha' in Uruguay, celebrated in March, pays tribute to the gaucho culture. What are some of the key activities featured during this festival?

- A) Modern art exhibitions and film screenings
- B) Rodeos, traditional music and dance, and equestrian parades
- C) Culinary competitions focused on seafood
- D) Technological innovation expos

12. In Peru, 'Día de la Canción Criolla' (October 31) emerged partly as a reaction to which socio-cultural movement prevalent in the early 20th century?

- A) The rise of industrialization
- B) The 'indigenista' movement and Andean migration to the capital
- C) The popularity of foreign musical genres
- D) The expansion of tourism infrastructure

13. The 'Feria de las Flores' in Medellín, Colombia, has evolved significantly since its inception in 1957. While the Silleteros parade remains central, what other types of parades or events have been incorporated over the years?

- A) Wildlife photography contests
- B) Classic and vintage car parades
- C) Extreme sports championships
- D) Opera performances

14. In the Andean worldview, the 'devil' figure in dances like the Diablada is often not seen as purely evil. What is its role or representation in this context?

- A) A symbol of pure destruction
- B) A representation of the natural order and balance
- C) A depiction of foreign invaders
- D) A metaphor for economic hardship

15. Semana Santa celebrations in Latin America often blend Catholic traditions with indigenous customs. In Ouro Preto, Brazil, during Holy Week, what is a unique tradition observed in the streets?

- A) Creating colorful carpets from flowers, sawdust, or coffee
- B) Burning effigies of Judas Iscariot
- C) Organizing donkey parades with religious figures
- D) Performing traditional 'carnaval' dances